/726 cont./

847 cry from under the ground for some time, but finally it stopped.
845 Although Walter's wife herself did not divulge any details about
626 the incident, her attendants on that occasion apparently gossiped about it. Since then she has not been safe from silent, but clearly noticeable reproaches from other women who severely condemned her action. Only a few of her friends sympathize with her about her misfortune. Everything points to the fact that the Yamana never approve of infanticide and severely condemn the malefactor.

6. Child Statistics

•163 Through a regrettable error Martial:198 made the statement that "one rarely sees families with a large number of children" /translated from French/. Other members of the Mission Scientifique convincingly contradict him. In reality, Fuegian families commonly have many children. Usually the Indian girl becomes a mother as early as her sixteenth year. Accurate counts are impossible because of the resistance of adults who refuse to speak about deceased children (161). Bridges (MM:XVIII, 223;1884)

> 161. Hyades (q):189 also encountered this difficulty.

repeatedly tried to determine accurately the population of the Yamana, for example, in June, 1884, but he could not find out the total number of children in each family.

We have a certain gauge in the observations of Hyades (q):189 in the region around Orange Bay in 1882, that is to say, at a time when the population had already been noticeably influenced by the Anglican missionaries. Among eight women from 35 to 60 years old he counted a total of 18 living children, namely, eleven girls and seven boys; among eight women from 25 to 30 years old there were again 18 living /727/ children, ten boys and eight girls. The sources of error in these data are so obvious that any comment is superfluous. Hyades was well aware of them and did not fail to point out a 50-year-old Fuegian woman who had given birth to 14 children; a 45-year-old woman was the mother of nine, and

/727 cont./

•163 another was the mother of ten children; finally there was a 38-year-old woman who had seven children. Although at the time of my journeys one was obliged to regard the entire race as deteriorating, some of the few surviving families nevertheless had many children. Walter, whose first and only wife was still living, kept a total of eleven children alive, and Felipe, whose wife was only 30 years old at the time of my count in May, 1923, was happy to have more than seven children (162).

162. It is only in Outes (g):55 that we come across the isolated statement: "The Fuegians do not have many offspring; it is very rare to have five, and generally they have no more than two" /translated from Spanish/. These are probably figures for the living children in each family, but even so they are wrong. Moreover, one should realize that parents never speak of their deceased children in front of strangers.

Mindful of the enormous difficulties involved, I believe that I must give at least six as the average number of children in a Fuegian family. Hahn (a):605 gives five (163). Hyades (q):189

163. I arrived at my figure independently of him and realized afterwards that it came close to his. He says: "The least number of children is five. I have, however, seen many old women who had as many as ten children" /translated from French/.

also ventured an estimate and was content with the number four, but he could scarcely have inquired specifically about the number of children in many families, or else, for the reason given above, he was not told the whole truth about deceased children. Bove (e):158 is not very reliable, although he correctly emphasizes the great fertility of Indian women (164). In Tierra del Fuego a large

164. He writes: "Moreover, the women are very fertile; seven or eight children are the

/727 cont./

•163 average, but one not infrequently finds young women who already have ten or twelve."

brood of children is always a recommendation for the parents; no one would venture to make sarcastic remarks about supposed incontinence in sexual life. In general the children of a couple follow one another at brief intervals (165).

165. Obviously Martial:198 exaggerates with his remark that "children are often born after long intervals" /translated from French/. He was probably influenced by Bridges (a):202 whose assertion, "few women have more than six children, owing to the great length of time between the several births" /cited in English/, is wrong on both counts.

165 Although the fertility of Fuegian marriages is amazing, it is counteracted by a frighteningly high infant mortality. The reasons are not as easy to determine as the facts themselves. Why, in view of the high birth rate, the population has remained the same as in former centuries raises the question as to the specific nature of the agreement in numbers. It is brought about by the mortality of many young /728/ people. During their first year of life children seldom die, but all the more soon after, and it is only at the age of puberty that the mortality rate again sharply decreases. Bove (e):158 is right when he says: "Mortality between the ages of two and ten is enormous." The following figures will confirm in general what I have said. Each of the two groups of eight women from around Orange Bay just referred to (p. 531) had a total of only 18 living children. This, reduced to an average per family, is too little to keep the race alive. Hence there is no doubt that, in view of the well-known fertility of Indian women, a rather large number of children from those families must have died. To document this we give a few data which Hyades (q):189 likewise gives: "A Fuegian woman 50 years old had had 14 children, only three of whom had not died prematurely. Another woman 45 years old had had nine children, eight dead at an early age" /translated from French/. By way of contrast, however, he also mentions the